

Local Law # 5 of 2022 - A local law authorizing the Town of Ancram to continue holding virtual public meetings, according with part WW of the laws of 2022.

Section 1: On April 9, 2022 Governor Hochul signed an amendment to the Open Meetings Law to allow (until July 1, 2024) the expanded use of videoconferencing by public bodies in the conduct of open meetings, under extraordinary circumstance, regardless of a declaration of emergency. In order to continue meeting virtually, a Town must pass a local law to opt in.

Pursuant to the amendment to the Open Meetings Law, beginning on June 16, 2022 the Town of Ancram may continue holding Hybrid Public Meetings, permitting members of the Town Board to appear virtually, under the following circumstances:

- A. The Town Board must meet in person at a physical location open to the public with a minimum number of members present to fulfill the Board's quorum requirement.
- B. Members of the Town Board may attend meetings virtually due to extraordinary circumstances; however, those members attending virtually may not count towards a quorum but may participate and vote. A quorum shall only be met by in-person member attendance.
- C. Extraordinary Circumstances shall be defined as: disability, illness, caregiving responsibilities, or any other significant or unexpected factor or event which precludes the member's physical attendance at such meeting.
- D. The Town Supervisor shall retain discretion over permitted extraordinary circumstances for meetings of the Town Board.
- E. The meeting minutes must identify which, if any, Board members are participating remotely.
- F. Members of the public will be allowed to attend, observe and participate where public comment or participation is authorized at the available location.
- G. All meetings conducted by videoconferencing, so that members of the Board can be heard, seen, and identified.
- H. Each meeting conducted using videoconferencing shall be recorded and such recordings posted or linked on the public website of the Board within five (5) business days following the meeting and shall remain so available for a minimum of five (5) years thereafter.
- I. The in person participation requirements of the law shall not apply during a state disaster emergency declared by the Governor or when a local state of emergency is declared by the Town Supervisor if it is determined that the circumstances necessitate the emergency declaration would affect or impair the ability for the public body to hold an in person meeting.
- J. The Town Board will broadcast all meetings using the Town Board ZOOM account or equivalent pursuant to meeting notice.
- K. This Town law shall be posted upon the Town website.

Section 2: This local law shall take effect immediately upon filing in the office of the Secretary of State.